

Concerns and Considerations of the DPH Drug Lab

Presented to the Massachusetts State Police through MOSES April 20, 2012

Career and position status

- 1) How will seniority be affected by the change?
- 2) Will we become forensic scientists or remain chemists?
 - a) If so, is there a time frame we might anticipate?
 - b) If so, might we anticipate a compensation change?
- 3) What is the career ladder with MSP?
 - a) how will seniority and experience be considered in consideration of promotions and upgrades?
 - b) are there established duties for Chem II, III, Lab Supervisor and management positions?
- 4) Can we get DEA training for those who haven't received it ?
- 5) Can we prioritize gc/ms training so we can achieve "one chemist to a case status," which we have not completed yet?

Location and time changes

- 1) Beyond the DPH assurance that Jamaica Plain will be the MSP site for another year, is there any consideration of securing the site as a permanent MSP lab site?
- 2) Will the Amherst lab be "stabilized" for a year as well? Any consideration of retaining the Amherst site as a satellite location permanently?
- 3) Any time frame for a transfer to the Maynard location? Will a change to Maynard alter the flex time arrangements we have adopted to here? Currently we have a 7-3 "shift," an 8-4 "shift" and a 9-5 "shift" (the consideration will be for contract obligations to day care, schools, and increased commuter time)
- 4) If Jamaica Plain or Amherst is dropped, will we have options to work in satellites other than Maynard?
- 5) Will we continue to work 7.5 hours per day?
- 6) If we move to 8 hours is there any compensation change?
- 7) How will we be charged for vacation and sick time... 7.5 hours or 8 hours?
- 8) Will our current vacation requests be recognized? We have been building our vacation requests around court obligations and alerting prosecutors to particular times we are absent from the lab by vacation and medical needs.
- 9) Will we be able to retain our accumulated sick time and use "sick" time to travel increased distances (from Maynard) to our doctor offices?
- 10) In meeting Court obligations to testify:
 - a) Are state vehicles available?
 - b) Would we have to report first to Maynard before going to Court at a distance? (for example, Barnstable)
 - c) Would we have to return to Maynard with a state car before going home as we must do at Jamaica Plain?
(a morale consideration is that the majority of us have high mileage vehicles)
- 11) will UMass permit free parking once we are MSP?
- 12) who would be our contact personnel officer for HR questions?
- 13) unlike DPH, will MSP reimburse our professional affiliation fees (eg. NEAFS)?

Infrastructure and support

- 1) what would be the source of our IT support?
 - a) who would repair and reprogram our computers as needed?
(currently we are serviced by a hybrid group of DPH and UMass techies)
 - b) phone and fax support (currently similar to our computer support)
- 2) housekeeping needs
 - a) custodial services
 - b) carpentry support
- 3) lab supply and disposal
 - a) who would supply the routine chemical supplies currently provided by DPH through the State Lab inventory/supply stockroom
 - b) glassware cleaning currently provided by the State Lab glassware division
 - c) clerical supplies, paper, printer ink, boxes
 - d) hazardous waste disposal. Our waste chemicals are currently disposed by a contractor provided by the State Lab
- 4) contract support for maintaining and repairing instruments beyond the scope of in house repairs and maintenance, such as program adaptations or part failures
- 5) quality control testing by an outside source to certify balances and microscopes by an "independent" party, in the manner expected by defense teams.

Smooth and seamless transition

The DPH Boston and Amherst teams presume we will be adopting MSP protocols because of the accredited status already in place. For the best scenario transition, we offer these considerations:

- 1) must we wait until July 1 to begin assimilating MSP sops, procedures and protocols
- 2) in adjusting to the MSP sops, how will the training be staged?
- 3) are we wasting our time implementing new DPH routines at this late moment, rather than going immediately into the MSP sops?
- 4) if the Boston and Amherst sites are retained, will the labs be accredited as a blanket phenomenon under the wing of Maynard or will there be some other process of accrediting Boston and Amherst?
- 5) How and where does the MSP archive analytical data? DPH's 15 year history is in the cages of the State Lab stockroom and the State Archives in Dorchester.
- 6) Is the State Police leadership aware of the current level of case backlog at DPH?
- 7) Is the State Police leadership aware of the personnel attrition in both our clerical and analytical areas?
- 8) Can we hire immediately the 6 to 10 chemists and additional clerical staff we need to re-establish credible turnaround times?
- 9) Can we gain MSP support for important legislative amendments to the drug statutes which DPH has not supported?
- 10) Can we begin meeting with MSP chemists, supervisors and management before July 1 and get this transition off to a successful start?